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INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 1193  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1842  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 5784  
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 2587  
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 8187  
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 7234  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 002826

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [EAIR](#) [ECON](#) [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MOD RELUCTANTLY AGREES TO COOPERATE WITH  
THE U.S. ON MANPADS

REF: A. ISLAMABAD 1642

[B](#). LAHORE 0183

[C](#). SCHWEMLEIN-PATTERSON 11/3 EMAIL (NOTAL)

Classified By: Ambassador Anne W. Patterson, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#). (C) Summary: In light of renewed discussion in Washington about the necessity of providing man-portable air defense system (MANPADS) assistance to Lahore airport (LHE) as a prerequisite to its certification for non-stop flights from LHE to the United States, Econ Counselor and ICE Attache met with Additional Secretary of Defense in charge of airports Major General Mir Haider Ali Khan, to get a sense of GOP receptivity to this new requirement. Although Haider stressed GOP disappointment with the continued delay and changing requirements before the USG makes a determination about Lahore airport, he did not rule out cooperation with the U.S. on MANPADS. He requested further information as to what specifically a MANPADS assistance program would entail and said he would allow a visit from the Transportation Security Administration, adding that Pakistan is already receiving MANPADS assistance from the UK. Post recommends coordinating any potential U.S. MANPADS assistance with that of the UK. End Summary.

Background

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[2](#). (C) In 2008 the USG informed the GOP that its approval of passenger name recognition (PNR) data sharing would be a condition for approving non-stop flights from Lahore airport (LHE) to New York (Note: Pakistan International Airlines already flies direct from JFK to LHE. End Note). The GOP refused, incensed by what it saw as a last-minute attempt to leverage PNR with non-stop flights, and duly welcomed Secretary for Homeland Security Napolitano's July 3 announcement that the USG would delink the two issues (Ref A). With some urging, the GOP agreed to allow the Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) to re-inspect LHE in August. Post understood that a MANPADS inspection, while desirable, was not/not a prerequisite for approving non-stop flights from Lahore. The technical inspection duly proceeded and exceeded TSA expectations as to the quality of security procedures in place at Lahore airport (Ref B). Post has since been awaiting a Department of Homeland Security determination regarding non-stop flights from Lahore.

Not Saying No  
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¶3. (C) In light of renewed discussion in Washington about the necessity of providing man-portable air defense system (MANPADS) assistance to Lahore airport as a prerequisite to its certification for non-stop flights (ref C), Econ Counselor and ICE Attache met with Additional Secretary of Defense Major General Mir Haider Ali Khan to get a sense of GOP receptivity to this potential new requirement. Haider reviewed at length the several years of GOP effort to get LHE airport qualified for non-stop flights to the U.S., stressing GOP disappointment with the continued delay and changing requirements before the USG makes a determination about LHE. In particular, Haider repeatedly questioned why, when no U.S. carriers were flying in or out of Lahore airport, the U.S. was considering imposing a MANPADS assessment.

¶4. (C) Emboffs explained that debate on this was ongoing inside the USG, but encouraged Haider to view a potential MANPADS program as a cooperative arrangement with the United States that would benefit Pakistan even more than the U.S. After some 90 minutes of discussion, Haider admitted that Pakistan is already cooperating with the U.K. on MANPADS; he did not rule out entering into a similar assistance program with the U.S. He requested further information as to what specifically such assistance would entail. Emboffs said that as a first step, TSA would likely need to send a team of experts in MANPADS security to Pakistan. Haider said he would try and accommodate such a request, once he better

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understands the U.S. program.

¶5. (C) Comment: We have reached out to the U.K. mission who confirm that the U.K. has been engaged in a MANPADS training and assistance program with the GOP for at least a year; they expect another visit from a U.K. assistance team in March 2010. Post is seeking further details on the U.K. program from the U.K. Mission in New Delhi, where the regional officer charged with administering the training program resides. Post recommends that, should Washington agencies determine that Lahore airport must undergo a MANPADS assessment before it can be certified for non-stop flights to the United States, we present our request as an offer of assistance vice a new hurdle to be overcome.  
PATTERSON